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ABSTRACT

Occupations and organizations within the British press and broadcasting systems are examined in this paper. Its sections summarize recent British research on media communicators and discuss characteristics of craft unions and other media organizations; the historical development of the British press; the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and Independent Television (ITV) companies; media trade unions; media management; occupational goals and ideologies in the media; the status and job responsibilities of editors, press journalists, and broadcast producers; the role of women and ethnic minorities in the media; entry into media careers; and media career possibilities. Tables are provided to show daily press circulation figures, penetration of national newspapers in selected regions, numbers employed in the newspaper industry and in the BBC, data regarding trade unions, editors' work activities, memberships of national unions, and the proportion of women journalists and editors in the British media. (GW)

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Session on Mass Communicator Research

BRITISH COMMUNICATOR OCCUPATIONS

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by

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Introduction

This paper attempts to locate communications within the wider division of labor and organizational framework of British press and broadcasting.

The general perspective is drawn from the sociology of occupations and organizations. Most of the recently published studies about British communicators are the work of academic sociologists or political scientists. Because Britain is at least fifty years behind the United States in the production of Journalism Professors(1) none of these works is by a member of that species(2). British sociology has tended to specialize in studies of social class, occupations, industry and organizations(3), and it therefore is scarcely surprising that sociologists working within such a tradition should - when they address the mass media - take some interest in the occupations.

This paper attempts to throw some comparative light on United States communicator occupations by considering both similarities and contrasts. United States and British mass media are unusual in the world - and differ from the media even of most of western Europe - in several strategic respects; for example, working within a two party system, American and British communicators adopt an as-if-it-were-possible attitude towards the notion of "neutral news", which is operationally defined in terms of steering between the two major parties(4).

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(1) The sole existing University course in journalism (at University College, Cardiff) was joined in 1976 by a second - at City University, London. Both courses are postgraduate and strongly vocational.

(2) Journalists and other communicators, of course, produce a steady flow of biographies and autobiographies. Three interesting recent ones are:

Simon Regan, Rupert Murdoch: a business biography
London: Angus and Robertson. 1976.

Grace Wyndham Goldie, Facing the Nation: Television and Politics 1936-76
London: The Bodley Head. 1977.

Howard Thomas, With an Independent Air
London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 1977

Two of the best and most prolific non-academic writers on the British mass media are Anthony Smith (whose The Shadow in the Cave - Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1974 - deals with broadcast producers), and John Whale (a journalist whose latest book is The Politics of the Media - Manchester University Press, 1977).

(3) A classic work is: A.M. Carr-Saunders and P.A. Wilson, The Professions. Oxford University Press. 1933. Recent British works in these fields are too numerous and too well known (at least to American sociologists) to require listing here. A useful book-length bibliography on British society and sociology is:

John Westergaard, Anne Heyman and Paul Miles, Modern British Society: a bibliography. London: Frances Pinter, 1977 edition.

(4) Jeremy Tunstall, The Media are American: Anglo-American media in the world
New York: Columbia University Press. 1977.

Nevertheless in many respects British and American media conditions are radically different. Simple differences of geographical scale are important, with British media being most comparable to those of the North East United States. But for any occupation, and the general strategy which its members pursue, the prevailing modes of the society are important. While the strategies of professionalization(1) and craft unionism exist in both societies and are not entirely mutually contradictory, professionalization has become a more dominant occupational strategy in the United States, while craft unionism remains relatively stronger in Britain.

Recent British research on communicators: methods and perspectives

Several collections of articles contain research studies of communicators(2). In addition some twenty book length research studies have been published in the 1970's dealing in whole or in part with communicators(3). The following system of classification relies loosely on the methods and the general approach adopted:

1. Direct observation and elite interviews. Jeremy Tunstall reported a study of 200 correspondents covering a wide range of specialist subjects at the national level; in a linked study he analysed the work of national political correspondents. An important direct observation study dealing with local journalists in the region around Manchester is by David Murphy.

More recently several studies have been published dealing wholly or mainly with the upper levels of the BBC. Tom Burns conducted two rounds of elite interviews in the BBC in 1963 and 1973; Burns used his "rolling interview" method and relied on his own well known brand of industrial sociology. Michael Tracey has focused on the reconstruction of critical incidents in recent history through the use of interviews; the studies deal mainly with BBC television coverage of politics. Philip Schlesinger was an observer in BBC television and radio newsrooms over a four year period and

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(1) Howard M. Vollmer and Donald L. Mills (eds), Professionalization
Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall. 1966.

(2) Paul Halmos (ed), "The Sociology of Mass Media Communicators", The Sociological Review Monograph. University of Keele 13. 1969.

Jeremy Tunstall (ed), Media Sociology.
Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 1970.

Denis McQuail (ed), Sociology of Mass Communications
Baltimore: Penguin Books. 1972.

James Curran, Michael Gurevitch and Janet Woollacott (eds), Mass Communication and Society. London: Edward Arnold. 1977.

(3) A useful mass media bibliography which includes many British and American items on communicators is:

Denis McQuail, Review of Sociological Writing on the Press
London: HMSO for Royal Commission on the Press. 1976.

his is probably the most detailed study yet completed of a single national broadcast news organization. All of these studies depend upon co-operation at the highest levels of the BBC, although all three studies are fairly critical - Schlesinger's sceptical account of BBC news coverage of Northern Ireland being an example(1). Another study by Jay Blumler and colleagues deals with the vexed question of "Party Political Broadcasts" - airtime on radio and all three TV networks provided free to the major political parties; Blumler had the co-operation of all the major political parties and also interviewed all the senior people concerned with news and political coverage in both BBC and ITV(2).

None of the above studies involved participant observation. But Krishan Kumar's account of the BBC producer is that of a sociologist who worked for a year as a BBC radio producer(3). In the field of British rock music, Simon Frith combines the perspectives of an academic sociologist with participant observation as a prolific writer in the music press(4).

2. Case Studies. The pioneering British case study of communicators was Blumler's direct observation of television producers covering the 1966 General Election. Other case studies include one of a political demonstration by James Halloran and colleagues, Philip Elliott's pioneering study of the production of a television mini-series, and historical case studies by Colin Seymour-Ure mainly dealing with

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(1) For a review of Schlesinger's book by a senior BBC executive see:

Richard Francis, "Late News is No News", The Listener, 99, 25 May 1978 pp678-9.

(2) Jeremy Tunstall, The Westminster Lobby Correspondents
London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1970.

Jeremy Tunstall, Journalists at Work
Beverly Hills: Sage. 1972.

David Murphy, The Silent Watchdog: the press in local politics
London: Constable. 1976.

Tom Burns, The BBC: Public Institution and Private World
London: Macmillan. 1977.

Michael Tracey, The Production of Political Television
London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1978.

Philip Schlesinger, Putting "reality" together: BBC News
London: Constable. 1978.

Jay Blumler, Michael Gurevitch and Julian Ives, The Challenge of Election Broadcasting. Leeds: Leeds University Press. 1978.

(3) Krishan Kumar, "Holding the Middle Ground: the BBC, the Public and the Professional Broadcaster", Sociology 9, January 1975 pp67-88.

(4) Simon Frith, The Sociology of Rock
London: Constable. 1978.

the press and political parties. The latter author has also studied editorial policymaking in prestige newspapers of eleven western countries(1).

3. Mainly content studies with some communicator element. A study from Glasgow University which recorded all TV networked news over a 22 week period, and two more "qualitative" (mainly content based) studies of crime news, all have several other characteristics in common. All three also deal with the communicators at some length but on the basis of rather modest empirical foundations; they also roughly share a perspective which combines Marxism and structuralism, together with elements of phenomenology and ethnomethodology(2).

4. Diffusion of Media Systems studies. Tunstall's study deals with the worldwide diffusion of American and British media products as well as product formats and occupational definitions. A new study by an Israeli-British team looked at broadcasting - and especially its history - in eleven developing countries. An as yet largely unpublished British study deals with the worldwide operations of AP, UPI, AFP and Reuters - using a mixture of elite interviews, direct observation and content analysis(3).

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(1) Jay Blumler, "Producers' attitudes towards television coverage of an election campaign: a case study", in Paul Halmos (ed) and in Jeremy Tunstall (ed) op cit.

James D. Halloran, Philip Elliott and Graham Murdock, Demonstrations and Communication: a case study. Baltimore: Penguin Books. 1970.

Philip Elliott, The Making of a Television Series
New York: Hastings House. 1972.

Colin Seymour-Ure, The Political Impact of Mass Media
Beverly Hills: Sage. 1974.

Colin Seymour-Ure, "Editorial Policy Making in the Press", Government and Opposition 4, Autumn 1969 pp427-525.

(2) Glasgow University Media Group, Bad News. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1976.

Steve Chibnall, Law and Order News
London: Tavistock Publications. 1976.

Stuart Hall, et al, Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order
London: Macmillan. 1978.

All three also derive their approaches partly from: Stanley Cohen and Jock Young (eds), The Manufacture of News. Beverly Hills: Sage. 1973.

(3) Jeremy Tunstall, The Media are American, op cit.

Elihu Katz and George Wedell, Broadcasting in the Third World
Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1978.

Oliver Boyd-Barrett, "The Global News Wholesalers" in George Gerbner (ed), Mass Media Policies in Changing Cultures. New York: John Wiley. pp13-20.

5. Management and Industrial Relations Research. Graham Cleverley's study of mismanagement in British national newspapers is based on previous employment in the industry and on his perspective as a business school teacher. Keith Sisson has written a useful book on wage bargaining in Fleet Street, and Peter Seglow covers the trade unions in television. All three deal in part with communicators(1).

6. The 1974-7 Royal Commission on the Press and Committee on the Future of Broadcasting. As in 1947-49 and 1960-62, so in 1974-77 a pair of official inquiries were set up by the British government - one for the press, one for broadcasting(2). Whereas the (Annan) Committee on Broadcasting published only one research volume, the (McGregor) Royal Commission on the Press spent some $450,000 on research and published eleven volumes of research. The Broadcasting Committee did publish a useful paper on Producers by Anthony Smith(3). One 400 page research volume of the Press Commission reports six studies all of which link content and communicators(4)

The Royal Commission on the Press also undertook a program of sample surveys, three of which dealt with journalists. One was a survey (response N = 1,200) dealing

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(1) Graham Cleverley, The Fleet Street Disaster: a case study in mismanagement Beverly Hills: Sage. 1976.

Keith Sisson, Industrial Relations in Fleet Street Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1975.

Peter Seglow, Trade Unionism in television: a case study in the development of white collar militancy. Famborough, Eng: Saxon House. 1978.

(2) Royal Commission on the Press, Interim Report: The National Newspaper Industry London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Cmnd 6433. 1976.

Royal Commission on the Press, Final Report. London: HMSO. Cmnd 6810. 1977.

Report of the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting. London: HMSO. Cmnd 6753. 1977.

(3) Anthony Smith, "The relationship of management with creative staff", Report of the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting: Appendices E-I London: HMSO. Cmnd 6753-I. 1977. pp129-58.

(4) Royal Commission on the Press, Studies on the Press (RCP Working Paper Number 3) London: HMSO. 1977.

A: Oliver Boyd-Barrett: "The Collection of Foreign News in the National Press". pp7-43.

B: Colin Seymour-Ure: "Science and Medicine and the Press"; "Parliament and Government"; "National Daily Papers and the Party System". pp45-201.

C: Jeremy Tunstall: "Letters to the Editor"; "'Editorial Sovereignty'in the British Press"; "The Problem of Industrial Relations News in the Press". pp205-397.

with recruits to journalism and with senior journalists responsible for their training(1). Another survey of 330 chief editors used a sample stratified across all the main types of publication. Finally there was a general sample survey of journalists which - unlike the other two surveys - was marred by a poor sampling frame and a high refusal rate; nevertheless even with the abysmal response rate of 43%, usable questionnaires were obtained from 911 journalists(2). These studies were all conducted by a survey organization, Social and Community Planning Research.

7. Social and Economic history studies. In recent years a number of young historians (mainly specialists in nineteenth century social and economic history) have turned their attention to the study of the British press and its personnel. Compared with, for example, the existing five volume History of the Times the approach of these young historians is distinctly that of the professional historical scholar - more sceptical and better grounded in historical knowledge of the society beyond the press. Some, but by no means all, of these young historians are Marxists(3).

To conclude on recent British research on communicators: There is a wide variety of such research. It differs from much American research in dealing mainly with the national level; it often uses a variety of methods; it often has an historical element. In the early 1970's the main starting point was the Anglo-American empirical tradition in the sociology of organizations, occupations and political behavior; most of the published research was broadly Weberian in approach. But since the mid 1970's there has been a distinct switch towards influence from various brands of, mainly French, neo-Marxism.

Organizational and Union Characteristics

> "Press and broadcasting organizations share many characteristics, because they share so many problems. Each must continually redesign the product, say something new, or at least fresh-seeming; but because of the need to do this on a large scale each day, and then to repeat it day after day, there has to be a major bureaucratization, some form of organized repetition. The media organization is a non-routine bureaucracy."(4)

Such organizations are vulnerable to stoppages of any kind. Media organizations solely dependent on advertising are especially vulnerable, but in any case where there is competition - including the BBC's - the vulnerability is there.

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(1) Royal Commission on the Press, Final Report: Appendices
London: HMSO. Cmnd 6810-1. 1977. pp144-62.

(2) Royal Commission on the Press, Attitudes to the Press (RCP Research Series, 3)
London: HMSO. Cmnd 6810-3. 1977. pp277-380.

(3) See Alan J. Lee, The Origins of the Popular Press 1855-1914
Totowa, N.J.:Rowman and Littlefield. 1976.

James Curran, George Boyce and Pauline Wingate (eds), Newspaper History: From the 17th Century to the present day. London: Constable. 1978.

(4) J. Tunstall, Journalists at Work, pp24-42.

Media organizations are also extremely subject to the economies of sale, because most of the creative (or design) costs lie in making the first copy. Internally the key point in a media organization is the point where the creative workers and the production workers meet. In the press this has been the interface between journalists and the men who set the type. In television it is the interface between the director and producer, the actors or journalists on one side, and the people who operate the cameras, sound, lighting and technical equipment on the other hand. The compositors and the television technicians in Britain are both leading examples of craft unionism, the"aristocracy of labor".

But craft unionism is only one of several broad orientations to work that exist or can exist in media organizations. At least seven possible orientations can be listed:

1. Owners.
2. Managers.
3. Political party worker.
4. Professional.
5. Clerical.
6. Craft union.
7. General (non-craft) union.

Of these possibilities the most favored in the British media has been the craft union orientation, although there are plenty of workers in manual non-craft unions.

The appropriate orientation for those on the other side of the key interface - such as journalists, producers and directors - is not obvious. In the United States these people's orientation is often "professional"; but in Britain, where unions in general and craft unions in particular are stronger, the tendency has been towards craft unionism. Many producers and directors in British television belong to ACTT, a craft trade union. The main journalists' body in Britain, the National Union of Journalists,has throughout its history been torn by internal dissension as to which model it should follow; it has largely ignored the professional model and adopted a white collar orientation with strong craft overtones.

In traditionally craft dominated industries - such as construction and shipbuilding - it has long been noted that the craft unions do much of what elswhere is middle management work(1). This occurs in both press and broadcasting - and with the unions doing much middle management, the formally designated middle management is weak, or in reality clerical.

It is, however, only middle management - the day to day running of departmental operations - which is largely done not by managers but by such non-managers as trade union "house" officials and by such supposedly unmangerial creative people as newspaper editors and TV producers. Senior management is another thing altogether. Media organizations are, indeed, extremely subject to having instructions and decisions fed in from the top; media organizations especially those making popular materials are highly suitable for being programmed from the top. Much of the non-routine element in the non-routine bureaucracy can be supplied by a single man. This was the old tycoon model, or (in the revealing traditional British press term) the "Proprietor". John Reith (BBC chief executive 1922-38) while drawing on military,

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(1) A.L. Stinchcombe, "Bureaucratic and craft administration of production: a comparative study", Administrative Science Quarterly 4. 1959. pp168-87.

engineering and civil service models - adopted a similar proprietorial style; even though Reith did not own the BBC, he managed it as though he did, and the "brute force of monopoly" internally fell largely into the hands of the chief executive.

This type of management probably works quite well in a media organization up to perhaps a total of 2,000 employees. The house union officials and creative workers, who are the effective middle management, can reach the senior management levels for the quick decisions which media work requires. This in practice is the type of management which exists in non-chain newspapers, in small magazine companies and also in British ITV companies. Even the five major "network" ITV companies in Britain each only makes less than 15% of the network output for one national channel(1). An ITV producer of a weekly program can reach the relevant senior manager (such as the program controller) with ease. The same kind of management style was still effective in British national newspapers in the 1930's; a typical Fleet Street daily (apart from canvassers) then employed between one and two thousand people(2).

It is when they start to get substantially bigger that media organizations seem to require a different management style. During the 1930's the BBC became progressively too large for Reith's management style and ever since there has been a search for a new general management style to control its informal "middle management". Somewhat the same thing has happened with the increasing concentration and conglomerate ownership of the British press since the 1950's.

The Press

Many nineteenth century newspaper owners had themselves been print workers. The small scale of operations and the real prospects for ascent meant that print workers - despite the very long history of their crafts - were far from fully unionized. The "Northcliffe Revolution" (around 1900) converted newspaper production into relatively large scale industry; paradoxically, the craft element was greatly strengthened, but so also were less skilled and also casual elements, especially beyond the point in the production process where the finished newspapers spill out of the machines.

The admirable H. Yeo gives a picture of quite astonishing chaos and incompetence prevailing in 1891; many newspaper owners, he says, have still to discover double entry book-keeping. Newspaper directors are often politicians, parsons, shopkeepers and others who neither know nor learn anything about sound newspaper management; "managing editors" while often adequate as "literary men" and editors, are bad managers(3).

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(1) These five ITV companies located in the four most populous of ITV's 14 regions make the bulk of the programming networked nationally on ITV. About 14% of airtime consists of imported programming; national news is handled by a separate company (ITN) and there are similar arrangements for sport.

(2) PEP (1938) Report on the British Press p.83.

(3) H. Yeo, Newspaper Management, London: John Heywood. 1891.

In the 1930's many earlier weaknesses continued. The highest salaries were paid to advertising managers. The "publishing" side of newspaper production was badly paid with casual labor predominant. The compositors, however, who had made their first national agreement only in 1896, now were the leading example of highly paid national newspaper workers. Already the device of a highly complex payment system was being used to baffle employers(1).

TABLE 1 - BRITISH DAILY PRESS: TOTAL CIRCULATIONS

	NATIONAL MORNING	LONDON EVENING	PROVINCIAL MORNING & EVENING	TOTAL DAILY
1920	5,430	1,940	7,300	14,670
1930	8,650	2,030	7,270	17,950
1938	10,400	1,850	7,000	19,250
1948	15,500	3,500	9,970	28,970
1956	16,780	2,810	10,320	29,910
1960	15,880	2,220	10,400	28,500
1966	15,591	1,886	8,780	26,257
1971	14,176	1,461	8,653	23,290
1976	14,006	992	8,141	23,129

Sources: N. Kaldor and R. Silverman, A Statistical Analysis of Advertising Expenditure and of the Revenue of the Press; Advertising Association, Advertising Expenditure 1960; RCP 1977.

TABLE 2 - PENETRATION OF NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS IN SELECTED REGIONS, 1935-1975

Percentage* within region reading each newspaper

		South East	(West) Midlands	North West	NE and North	Scotland
Daily Express	1935	20.7	15.0	14.8	10.1	20.2
" "	1975	19	16	24	17	29
Daily Mail	1935	16.9	12.7	13.4	12.9	8.9
" "	1975	15	13	13	9	4

*For 1935 the data relate to families, for 1975 to all adults.

Sources: PEP (1938) Report on the British Press; JICNARS Jan - Dec 1975.

(1) Political and Economic Planning, The British Press. London: PEP. p.86.

Britain still has a national press, with 65% of the entire daily sale being of London (plus Manchester editions) mornings or evenings - and all "provincial" mornings and evenings account for only 35% of the daily sale (see Table 1). Sunday newspaper and magazine publication is even more London dominated. The market penetration of national morning papers in provincial regions in some cases (Table 2) altered little between 1935 and 1975. The British national press (Fleet Street) is somewhat like the New York daily press of the 1950's - many titles, much loss making, excessive competition and trade union overmanning. There has been a steady drift of "display" advertising to television and of "classified" to provincial papers. Fleet Street is now polarized between four prestige dailies (all broadsheet and mainly dependent on advertising) and four popular dailies (all tabloid, dependent on sales and now engaged in a savage sales war). The provincial press is dominated by large chains of monopoly dailies. Whether Fleet Street will go the way of the New York (and Paris) dailies is the big question. One crucially different factor is that Fleet Street dailies are now mainly owned by conglomerates, and companies whose major interests lie in oil, banking, paper and the like; these companies may - or may not - be willing to subsidize Fleet Street's losses and its labor practices which are bizarre even by British standards.

All of this is crucial also for communicators. Table 3 shows that the provincial newspapers already employ 9,000 journalists against national newspapers' 2,500. But this latter figure could be cut by half if half the Fleet Street newspapers close. This "crisis of Fleet Street" inevitably focuses attention on trade unions.

TABLE 3 - NUMBERS EMPLOYED IN BRITISH NEWSPAPER INDUSTRY, 1974

	National Newspapers		Provincial Newspapers	
	N	%	N	%
"STAFF"				
Editorial Staff	2,587	12.0	9,028	22.0
Other Staff	6,442	30.0	19,808	36.0
(a) TOTAL STAFF	9,029	42.0	28,836	58.0
"CRAFT"				
Compositors	1,836	8.6	7,155	17.4
Other Craft	1,753	8.3	3,417	8.3
(b) TOTAL CRAFT	3,589	16.9	10,572	25.7
(c) TOTAL OTHER	8,621	40.6	6,675	16.2
OVERALL TOTAL	21,239	100.0	41,083	100.0

Source: Royal Commission on the Press, Industrial Relations in the Provincial Newspaper and Periodical Industries. London: HMSO. 1977. p.13.

The second Royal Commission on the Press (1961-2) and the third (1974-7), as well as numerous other reports in between, documented the extraordinary ascendancy of the craft unions in national newspapers. Previously concern was expressed about overmanning and high pay; but during the 1970's the focus turned towards the press electronic revolution. It revolutionizes the interface between journalists and linotype operators by largely abolishing the latter; single keyboarding succeeds dual keyboarding.

The Royal Commission in its 1976 Interim Report called on Fleet Street unions to accept the new technology(1), but the memberships ballotted not to do so. Were the union members burying their heads or using them? Or did they see in the wave of conglomeratization a means for permanently subsidizing old technology and old skills?

Labor costs account for a significantly smaller proportion of total costs on the national newspapers(2) - and thus obtainable cost savings must be smaller on these publications. Table 3 shows the total numbers employed in national and provincial newspapers.

The two jobs at the key interface are labor intensive - regardless how small the circulation of a provincial paper, some journalists are needed and (with hot metal) some compositors to set it in type. On national papers compositors and editorial together are only just over half the proportion found on provincials; thus the bargaining strength and the elite status of journalists and compositors is much more real on nationals than on provincials (whose monopoly market position also enables them to be tougher with unions). The elite position of journalists and compositors in the national press explains why both groups seem willing to accept almost any conditions (including ownership by oil companies) in order to keep Fleet Street alive.

BBC and ITV

Some thirty times larger than the typical ITV company, the BBC in 1976 employed over 25,000 people. Table 4 shows the biggest categories of employment and the 1962-76 changes. The arrival of the second BBC TV national channel is shown in the greatly increased numbers of salaried staff in television. Television accounts for the bulk of BBC expenditure - 70% of the roughly $500 million which the BBC spent in 1977-8.

A BBC producer can call on 125 different specialized services within the BBC to help or hinder him. The BBC has 2 national TV and 4 radio channels; it transmits 700 hours a week external radio in English and in 38 other languages. It has four permanent symphon orchestras, and nine other permanent musical bodies.

ITV companies by comparison are minute. ATV, the largest of the network companies has since 1955 been dominated by a single personality - Lord (Lew) Grade - and its output reflects his show business background.

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(1) For a British view of the American experience see:

Rex Winsbury, New Technology and the Press: a study of experience in the United States. London: HMSO for the Royal Commission on the Press. 1975.

(2) On mass sale popular national Sunday newspapers in 1975 labor accounted for only 36% of total costs, against 62% for local weekly papers. Royal Commission on the Press, Final Report. 1977. p.42.

TABLE 4 - BBC PERSONNEL 1962-76

Salaried Monthly Staff	March 1962	September 1976	1962	1976
	Numbers		Percentages	
Radio	569	844	3.2	3.7
Local Radio	0	453	0	1.8
Television	1,136	3,012	6.4	11.7
Open University	0	162	0	0.6
External (overseas radio)	1,090	1,259	6.2	4.9
Regions	699	1,536	4.0	5.9
News	299	508	1.7	2.0
Engineering	3,684	5,450	20.9	21.9
Personnel	285	700	1.6	2.7
Public Affairs, including audience research & libraries	232	458	1.3	1.8
Finance	115	137	0.7	0.6
Monthly Staff	8,109	14,519	46.0	56.2
Secretarial, weekly	9,537	11,328	54.0	43.8
Total	17,646	25,847	100.0	100.0

Source: Report of the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting (1977) 98.

Thus two very different sorts of television organization face the trade unions. The BBC did not even have a house union until 1945. The next big step in unionism involved the start of ITV in 1955. ACTT, a film union, stepped in and organized the ITV technicians. This union had over its years in the film industry managed to establish very generous levels of manning - partly as an agreed method of relieving the insecure and casual nature of film employment. ITV in 1955 looked equally uncertain and the generous manning and pay levels were carried across into ITV, where ACTT ever since has been the dominant union - not only for technical staff but also for producers and directors.

These developments in ITV galvanised the BBC house union into much more vigorous existence; within a few years not only had ABS become much more militant but the BBC also recognized for bargaining four other Unions - the NUJ for journalists, NATTKE (another film union), EETPU (the electricians' union) and SOGAT (a print union). ITV also recognized the first three of these. Both BBC and ITV recognize British Actors' Equity and the Musicians' Union.

Consequently BBC and ITV each recognize and negotiate with some half dozen extremely active trade unions, which have a predominantly craft flavor. In specialize

areas these unions play a large part in determining programming - for example the Musicians' Union in limiting the BBC's daily output of recorded music. The trade unions also played a major part in limiting both BBC TV and ITV program imports to 14% of airtime.

Media Trade Unions

Although all are national unions, the real strength of media unions is at the local branch, and even more the "house" level. Within the press the house level, that is the layer of the unions within an individual employing organization, is called the "chapel" - one of many quaint expressions going back to the medieval origins of printing. Fleet Street alone - including magazines - has the incredible number of 360 separate union chapels; in Fleet Street Union power is chapel power. The complexity of payments systems and the astonishing anomalies focus upon splits not merely between a number of warring unions, but between warring chapel factions within a single union. A favorite tactic is the "chapel meeting" or effectively a lightning strike close to a production deadline; if the management does not concede it may lose (forever) an edition, and if it does concede it may pile up yet one more weird extra payment on to a pile already so high that some earnings are three times the basic rate.

TABLE 5 - SOME TRADE UNIONS IN BRITISH PRESS AND TELEVISION 1978

Initials	Full Name	Main areas of membership in newspapers and broadcasting
NUJ*	National Union of Journalists	Journalism, newspapers, magazines, radio/TV news, public relations.
IOJ*	Institute of Journalists	Journalism
NGA	National Graphical Association	Compositors, readers, stereotypers, machine minders and other crafts.
SOGAT	Society of Graphical and Allied Trades	Publishing, loading, driving.
NATSOPA	National Society of Operative Printers, Graphical and Media Personnel	Non-craft, production and white collar work in the press.
ABS*	Association of Broadcasting Staff	BBC radio, TV and administration
ACTT*	Association of Cinematograph Television and Allied Technicians.	Film production, television production (ITV) and film processing.

* indicates trade union including substantial number of communicator members.

In broadcasting the detail is much simpler. ACTT has set the pace for the other unions by insisting on major overmanning. In ITV also the power is concentrated at the house level, there are many anomalies, inter union rivalries are important and so on. Position in the production process determines both trade union membership and working hours. People tend to work on odd timetables; four day weeks, three on and three off work cycles, and so on, are common and have the effect of shutting communicators away into their private occupational worlds.

"Management"

"Management" often becomes a residual category. Many media "managers" have junior white collar jobs. People who elsewhere would be called managers are in the media known as "news editor" (someone who manages a news operation) or "producers" (who may be responsible for a hundred people) or "chapel father" (who in the press may allocate workers to tasks) or "branch secretary" (who in the national press may even hire and fire labor).

Both the Annan Broadcasting Committee and the McGregor Royal Commission on the Press repeated in 1977 criticisms of media managers. The Annan Committee said that the BBC was seriously overmanned at the top, while ITV was deliberately overmanned by certain unions: "Management both in the BBC and in most of the companies must abandon the outmoded system of benevolent yet autocratic paternalism"(1).

In the press the traditional comment on management has been as to its inadequacy. The PEP report in 1938 found that there was no career structure in any of the main management fields; advertising departments normally recruited bright young men from the accounts department(2) - thus perhaps ensuring that both advertising and accounts were poorly managed. Various reports conducted for the 1977 Press Commission found quality of management improving only slowly. The ACAS report on the national newspaper industry found that in 1977 few managers had worked outside the national newspaper industry and were thus used to static technology; management was excessively sectionalised and not well informed on general management's objectives or even on union agreements.

Graham Cleverley's book The Fleet Street Disaster is subtitled "a case study in mismanagement". He points out that managers in Fleet Street not only lack a career structure and adequate experience or qualificatiins; besides not being very competent, they are - he says - actually quite insecure. They can be sacked. One final comment - which illustrates the prevalence of trade unionism - is that in Fleet Street "managers" are expected to belong to a Trade Union. The union they belong to is NATSOPA, the larger of Fleet Street's "unskilled" Unions.

Occupational goals and ideologies

To some extent the seven different orientations to work discussed previously relate to different occupational goals:

1. Owners: in practice have a mixture of goals including prestige and profit (or at least not making a loss).

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(1) Report of the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting, 1977. p.429.

(2) Political and Economic Planning op. cit. p.88.

2. Managers: this work orientation may be directed towards sales revenue, or advertising revenue, or profit. Many managers may have a mixed managerial/professional orientation - for example the engineers (and more recently) accountants who are strongly represented in upper middle BBC management.

3. Political party worker: In the mid nineteenth century, when newspapers had close ties with political factions and parties, the journalist was also a political employee (or "hack" - a horse for hire). It is when this party political aspect diminishes that a new occupational orientation is needed.

4. Professional: a work orientation which makes claims of public service and for professional autonomy is clearly going to be directed towards the prestige goal; journalists, both in the press and television, are the prime examples.

5. Clerical: much "managerial" work in the press is more accurately clerical; media organizations require a rather large category of lower managerial or upper clerical workers.

6. Craft union: this very powerfully prevalent work orientation is directed mainly towards "production" - getting the product out whether it be programming or publications; it has little direct connection with revenue or customers.

7. General (non-craft) union: most common in press post-production or "publishing" areas; this work is also characterized by overmanning and union resistance to labour-saving equipment. In Fleet Street a sizeable fraction of unskilled workers are casually employed.

Editors: Managers, Professionals or Clerks?

A Royal Commission paper called "'Editorial Sovereignty' in the British press". argues that there is a British myth of Editorial Sovereignty(1). This myth presents the editor as in sovereign and absolute command of the editorial content of his publication and of the journalists who write it; this tradition of the charismatic celebrity editor was developed by John Delane (editor of The Times, 1841-77), and was carried forward by C.P. Scott (editor of the Manchester Guardian, 1871-1929).

Delane was much less sovereign than politicians of the time thought. C.P. Scott did indeed approach sovereignty, but in his later days (1907-29) he was also the owner. The most truly sovereign editor of more recent years was Geoffrey Dawson of The Times (1912-19 and 1922-41); but during his second editorship he was armed with a unique written contract. The results also - notably appeasement of Hitler - were exceptional. In all but a very few cases (usually involving owner-editors), editors have not been, are not, and cannot realistically be, sovereign. The present day reality of Times Newspapers - honestly and openly incorporated in the relevant public document - is that editors of The Times and Sunday Times are managers of the editorial

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(1) Jeremy Tunstall in Royal Commission on the Press, Studies on the Press, op cit pp.249-341.

department, under the direction of an Editor-in-chief who appoints both the editors and their immediate subordinates, and allocates budgets(1).

Chief editors are editorial managers; as Table 6 shows, they spend most of their time directing the writing efforts of others and in administration, while themselves writing little. Most British editors are not members even of the relevant subsidiary's board of directors; they have little formal job security and are not well paid. The doctrine of editorial sovereignty, while best seen as part of the occupational ideology of journalism - nevertheless does have a little reality, especially at the day-to-day level, which for working members of a day-to-day occupation is important.

TABLE 6 - EDITORS' WORK ACTIVITIES, 1976

	Mean Percent of time spent on:		
Editors of	Writing for Publication	Editing/ Sub-editing etc	Administration
National newspapers	9%	51%	41%
Provincial mornings	16	35	50
Provincial evenings	12	46	44
Weekly newspapers	19	61	24
Magazines	26	48	27
Mean for all Editors	21%	52%	29%
Unweighted N = 330 Editors			

Source: Royal Commission on the Press (1977) Attitudes to the Press, p.302.

Press Journalists: Managers, Professionals, Clerks or Craftsmen?

Although most editors are most accurately seen as being predominantly managers, they are managers with some professional flavor. "Journalist" is a job title with possibilities for at least four different orientations.

1. Managers - certain executive posts are primarily managerial, in particular some of the desk jobs such as "news editor" (city editor).

2. Professionals - those jobs in which possession of a specialized qualification may be relevant (such as an economics degree for financial journalism or foreign language ability for foreign correspondent) come nearest to the professional

(1) Monopolies Commission, The Times Newspaper and the Sunday Times Newspaper H.C. 273. London: HMSO. 1966.

model. But journalist professionals - although like other would-be professionals they can claim autonomy - cannot easily acquire autonomy, in particular because there is no distinctive body of knowledge which they can convincingly claim to control.

3. Clerical - much journalists' work always has had strong clerical overtones - as the continuing potency of shorthand, a clerical skill, in British journalism clearly demonstrates(1).

4. Craft - only one type of "journalism" fairly obviously conforms to the craft model - news photography- in Britain photographers belong to the main journalists' trade union.

TABLE 7 - MEMBERSHIPS OF NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS AND INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISTS, 1886 - 1975.

	Institute of Journalists Membership	National Union of Journalists Membership	Combined Membership	NUJ Percentage of Combined Membership
				%
1886	250	-	250	-
1892	3,114	-	3,114	-
1907	2,537	738	3,311	22.3
1915	1,989	3,127	5,116	61.1
1925	2,038	4,827	6,865	70.3
1935	2,465	5,919	8,384	70.6
1945	2,878	8,400	11,278	74.5
1955	2,619	13,364	15,983	83.6
1965	2,400	19,621	22,021	89.0
1975	2,396	28,274	30,670	92.2

Source: Harry Christian, Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Keele (1977) p.225.

The National Union of Journalists in its early days was a deliberate rejection of the "professionally" oriented "Institute of Journalists". However the NUJ also modelled itself partly on the teachers' unions; as Table 7 shows, the NUJ has steadily outstripped the IOJ and in effect has defined journalism as responsible white collar work, within large impersonal employing organizations; this was how British provincial (chain) journalism increasingly developed and it was in provincial journalism that the core of the NUJ was located.

(1) The inability of American journalists to take an accurate shorthand note always astonishes their British opposite numbers, but this inability may make sense as a professionalizing strategy.

But the craft model has always also been a seductive one, and a common complaint was that compositors earned more than journalists. From the 1920's well into the 1940's the NUJ's proportion of journalists in membership stayed around 70%. But gradually this proportion was increased and largely by using craft union tactics. The craft union tactic of controlling apprenticeship and entry was pursued through the "apprenticeship" training scheme by forcing all newspaper recruits to start on local papers where the employers' miserly pay offerings made recruitment to the NUJ easy. The union "closed shops" which the NUJ most envied were those of the high-paid London craftsmen - and the NUJ aimed (with some success) to obtain closed shops in both national newspapers and magazines.

The craft approach has proved an effective coalition strategy for holding together not only a journalist occupation which retains managerial, professional and clerical elements, but also an NUJ increasing proportions of whose members work in magazines, in broadcasting, public relations and in book publishing.

Broadcast Producers

By comparison with the press journalist, the case of the broadcast producer is fairly clearcut - he is a creative manager.

The producer in British broadcasting is integrated into management. This is in contrast to the more politicized German and French models where program-making is more clearly demarcated from administration(1). The British producer is expected to find for himself the middle ground, and various kinds of guidance are provided. These include public pronouncements such as BBC "lunchtime lectures"; secondly broad guidance goes out from a central weekly meeting in the form of minutes, copies of which reach senior producers in all news and factual programming; thirdly there are sub-departmental meetings and discussions; fourthly the BBC's daily audience research ratings are fed back to producers. All this is to be interpreted flexibly with resort to "reference up" in doubtful cases.

With the middle ground thus sketched out for him, the producer's job is to bring the resources of the BBC together and to co-ordinate the activities of the various specialist craft skills. The senior craft skill is in effect the "director", who directs the cameras, the actors or the other performers, and is in turn responsible to the producer. The same definition of the producer as a creative manager occurs in ITV, but within much smaller organizations.

Women and Ethnic Minorities

The craft model alone goes a long way to explain - but not to justify - how it comes about that women and members of ethnic minorities tend to be excluded. Of course, among managers and professionals elsewhere women are massively outnumbered.

Table 8 shows that women journalists are relatively rare outside weekly newspapers and (especially consumer) magazines. There are two interesting small

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(1) Anthony Smith, op cit.

scale studies of discrimination against women journalists in Fleet Street and women producers in the BBC(1). The studies have relatively similar findings - formal practices and even more the informal occupational culture define both national journalism and broadcasting as "a man's world". The small minority of women who reach these levels are seen as not suitable for the more prestigious fields and tend to be employed in "soft" news areas, women's pages and in programming aimed at women or children.

TABLE 8 - WOMEN AS PROPORTION OF ALL JOURNALISTS AND EDITORS, IN THE BRITISH PRESS, 1976

	Women as percentage of:	
	JOURNALISTS	EDITORS
	%	%
National newspapers	8	-
Provincial mornings	7	-
Provincial evenings	12	-
Weekly newspapers	19	2
Magazines	38	11
All Publications	17	7
Base Total N =	911	330

Source: Royal Commission on the Press, Attitudes to the Press Cmnd 6810-3. London: HMSO. 1977. pp294, 333.

Communicators of Asian or African origin are rare in Britain. The proportion is probably well below 0.5% in communicator occupations against 3.5% in the general British population.

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(1) M. Fogarty, I. Allen, J. Allen and P. Walters, Women in Top Jobs London: Allen and Unwin. 1971.

Roger Smith, "Sex and Occupational Role in Fleet Street", in Diana Barker and Sheila Allen (eds), Dependence and Exploitation in Work and Marriage London: Longman. 1976. pp70-87.

Training and Entry

In the British press the craft apprenticeship system is highly important. Printing apprenticeships are not served in Fleet Street; indeed employment on national newspapers is a reward reserved mainly for print workers to enter in their middle years. The journalists' recruitment follows a partly similar pattern. The national press has a "predatory tradition" in recruitment - it recruits its personnel from the provinces.

The BBC, however, as an almost entirely national organization, has its own massive training operation - providing courses for producers and engineers, for new recruits and old hands. In 1975 over five thousand people within the BBC (a fifth of all employees) attended in the single year one of these courses(1). ITV has an utterly different approach; it is no less predatory than Fleet Street. ITV does almost no training, but relies heavily on recruiting trained people from the BBC.

Careers

Some industries and occupations provide relatively ordered careers. In the media, careers tend to be chaotic, with certain exceptions. Possibilities for career advance depend both on the number and type, as well as the shape, of employing organizations. Media organizations tend to bulge at the middle levels of pay and seniority, which facilitates rapid early ascent, but makes career advance into the upper levels very difficult, there being so few jobs to advance into.

The BBC, in this respect, is once again unique - in having an extremely elaborate system of career planning. It has a job grading system which encompasses all jobs into six grading structures, from the realistically named "Management, Production and Editorial" (MP) at the top to the more euphemistically named "General Services" (GS) at the bottom. The BBC also runs annual appraisal interviewing. Vacancies (including most senior ones) are advertised, and filled competitively after interview. Predictably, great individual resentment and much trade union ingenuity focus on this apparatus(2). But it does also provide literally hundreds of career ladders. In television production one ladder leads via "researcher" or "production assistant" or "script editor" to "director", to "producer", to "senior producer" and then perhaps across to ITV at a higher salary.

In press journalism the ideal career should start on a local weekly in the north of England, then a daily, then Manchester; next to London as reporter, then specialist correspondent and finally news executive. Few cases follow this pattern at all closely(3), which introduces into journalism a chronic concern with career building.

In commercial management impressionistic evidence suggests a tendency for there to be segmented career ladders - for production, circulation and advertising - with relatively little movement between job functions or even companies. Despite

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(1) Report of the Committee on the Future of Broadcasting, 1977, p.437.

(2) Tom Burns, op cit, pp78-97.

(3) Jeremy Tunstall, 1971, op cit.

the mammoth quantities of research on press production personnel, not much is known about their careers - except nationally that they tend to start and end late. The Royal Commission on the Press found in 1975 that 52% of national newspaper production employees in London were aged fifty or over(1).

The BBC by contrast puts its trust in youth. Sixty is the normal compulsory retirement age and some retire earlier. Promotions to senior management commonly occur at age forty and thirty is not an unusual age at which to become producer of a major program series.

Conclusion

The emphasis upon trade unionism among British communicator "professionals" may serve as a reminder that notions of "professionalism" are not culture free. It may not be appropriate, for example, to regard journalists in some other part of the world as being a greater or lesser distance behind the United States journalists on a clearly mapped path towards an ultimate professional goal.

Moreover the professional-plus-clerical-trade-union combination is not unknown in the United States; it is precisely on the most "professionally" admired metropolitan publications that the American Newspaper Guild is strongest.

Looked at comparatively, perhaps the most distinctive single aspect of the British communicator scene is the strength of trade unions in general and of the predominant journalists' union - the National Union of Journalists - in particular. The NUJ is also unusual in comparison with the rest of western Europe, where the prevalent political/religious divides are typically reflected in journalist membership being spread between several unions and associations.

The issue of the appropriate work orientation for communicators may be more rather than less significant and contested in the future. Technological changes, in both the immediate and distant future - while they threaten so many other groups in the media - seem likely to increase the strategic importance of communicators. And definitional questions as to what communicators are, or do, or should be, will increasingly impinge on nearly all of the big questions about the media: the role of political parties and government; the character and prerogatives of ownership; the initial selection of communicators and the choice of editors; the media rights of women, minorities, and of all citizens.

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(1) Royal Commission on the Press, Interim Report, 1976. p.61.